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**Testimony of Connecticut Water Company
Environment Committee
March 12, 2010**

RE: SB-383, AN ACT CONCERNING A STATE-WIDE WATER USE PLAN

The Connecticut Water Company would like to express our support of SB-383, AAC A *State-Wide Water Use Plan*. Connecticut Water is a public water utility that provides water service to nearly 90,000 customers in 55 towns throughout Connecticut. We employ approximately 225 people and are proud of our long record of customer service, regulatory compliance and environmental stewardship. We take seriously our responsibility to supply our customers and the communities we serve with safe, reliable water supplies. To that end, we have developed sources of supply, constructed treatment facilities and distribution systems to meet the current and future needs of the communities we serve, and see, first hand, the challenges caused by the lack of a comprehensive, state-wide water use plan.

Numerous studies and reports, including a comprehensive assessment by the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee¹, have decried the absence of a state-wide water resources management plan. Absent such a plan, we run the risk of implementing piecemeal policies and practices, and of making regulatory decisions that lack the broad perspective necessary to advance the common good. DEP's recent attempt to craft streamflow regulations in such a policy vacuum is but one example of the types of difficulties the lack of a comprehensive plan presents.

We support language proffered by the Connecticut Water Works Association that would amend CGS Section 22a-352 to establish a continuing planning process for the management of the water resources of the state (see attached). Such a plan would establish the means of equitably allocating water resources in a manner that balances priorities for the environment, public health, public safety, agriculture, industrial uses, and economic development. Moreover, a long-range plan would require us to objectively confront our current and future water resource challenges and develop timely, comprehensive strategies in response – thereby increasing our likelihood of successfully managing those challenges and meeting the water needs of the state.

As always, we stand ready to work with the Legislature and other stakeholders to improve the process by which the state manages its water resources. We urge the Committee to adopt the attached substitute language and thank you for the opportunity to comment.

¹ *Legislative Program Review & Investigations, Streamflow Study, December 2003*

PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE

AN ACT CONCERNING A STATEWIDE WATER USE PLAN.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Section 22a-352 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2010*):

(a) The [Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Public Health and the Office of Policy and Management, shall establish a continuing planning process and shall prepare and periodically update jointly]Water Planning Council, established pursuant to section 25-33o, shall develop, within available appropriations, a process and implementation schedule that shall be utilized by said council for the development, implementation and periodic update of a state-wide long-range plan for the management of the water resources of the state. Such plan shall establish a method to: Effectively allocate water resources so as to meet the needs and requirements of industry, agriculture and public utilities, and provide sufficient water to sustain aquatic ecosystems, maintain economic development; protect the quality of the ground and surface-water supply; enhance public health, public safety and develop water conservation measures to ensure water demand and supply result in equitable availability through drought and non-drought conditions alike; and properly manage flood control. In [carrying out such preparation the aforesaid agencies]developing such long-range plan, the Water Planning Council shall: (1) Design a unified planning program and budget; (2) coordinate regional water and sewer facilities plans; [and provide technical or financial assistance to regional planning agencies in the preparation of regional water and sewer facilities plans which are necessary as guidelines for the planning and designing of local and interlocal facilities and which are required by the federal government as a prerequisite for grants to municipalities for the construction of certain water and sewer facilities](3) seek involvement of interested parties; (4) solicit input from the advisory group established pursuant to section 25-33o of the general statutes; (5) coordinate with the Office of Responsible Growth, established by Executive Order No. 15 of Governor M. Jodi Rell; and (6) integrate individual water utility coordinating committee plans, the state plan of conservation and development, as described in section 16a-30, and any other planning documents deemed necessary by said council.

(b)The [state-wide water resources] plan developed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall: (1) Identify the quantities and qualities of water that could be available to specific areas under feasible distribution; (2) identify present and projected demands for water for specific areas; (3) recommend the utilization of the state's water resources, including surface and subsurface water, for their greatest benefits; (4) make

recommendations for such major engineering works or special districts which may be necessary, including the need, timing and general cost thereof; (5) recommend land use and other measures where appropriate to insure the desired quality and abundance of water; (6) take into account desired recreational, agricultural, industrial and commercial use of water bodies; (7) inform the people of Connecticut about the importance of water-resource stewardship; (8) foster intergovernmental communication for water conservation and planning; (9) meet data collection and analysis needs so as to continue informed and effective water supply planning; (10) take into account the ecological, environmental and economic impact that implementation of the plan will have on the state; (11) include short and long-range objectives and strategies to effectuate the purposes of this section; and [(7)](12) seek to incorporate regional and local plans and programs for water use and management and plans for water and sewerage facilities in the state-wide plan. Not later than January 1, 2011, the Water Planning Council shall submit such plan and implementation schedule, in accordance with section 11-4a, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to public health, planning and development, the environment, and public utilities for consideration and review by said committees.

[(c)Upon completion of each planning document and when adopted by the Commissioner of Environmental Protection, the Commissioner of Public Health and the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, said final plan shall be submitted to the General Assembly.]